

that reflect my commitment to managing government better. These include measures to improve accountability, to reduce waste, to reform regulation, to employ risk management budgeting in addressing threats to health and safety, and to set clear objectives and measure performance in meeting them.

Finally, consistent with the statutory caps enacted last year, the budget provides the resources necessary to maintain national security, and to better advance American interests abroad. As the budget goes to press, the timing of the resolution of the multinational coalition's efforts to reverse the aggression in the Persian Gulf is uncertain. For this reason, the budget reflects only a placeholder for Operation Desert Shield. A supplemental request for the incremental costs of Desert Shield, which includes

Desert Storm, will be forwarded to the Congress in the coming weeks.

The priority investments embodied in this budget will help America prepare for the requirements and opportunities presented by a rapidly changing world. I look forward to working with the Congress in developing a budget that lays the groundwork for a brighter future, protects our national interests, and helps create the conditions for long-term economic growth and prosperity.

February 4, 1991

GEORGE BUSH

Note: The President's message was printed in the report entitled "Budget of the United States Government, Fiscal Year 1992." It was not issued as a White House press release.

Remarks to Members of the National Governors' Association

February 4, 1991

Let me just make a few brief comments, and then what I really am anxious to do is to hear from you. I know you've been briefed in some detail on many aspects of the domestic program, but I'd like to get from you a feel for emphasis and some of your most serious concerns.

But first, my thanks to you, Governor Gardner and Governor Ashcroft. And I know Dick Cheney has briefed you on the Gulf. And let me simply just say this on it: It's going according to plan. We are going to set the timetable for what lies ahead—not Saddam Hussein. And I have a very strong team that is working this problem of the Gulf. Not only do I have great confidence in the officers and the men and women in the Gulf itself but, of course, I think Dick Cheney and General Colin Powell—working so closely together and then working very closely with our Chief of Staff here and mainly with General Scowcroft, my able right hand on these national security matters.

I have confidence that we're doing the right thing, and I have confidence that it is going the way we planned. And there

have been no surprises, and there will not be any quick changes, nor will I try to tie the hands of the military because I just feel we have to go forward and prosecute this to a successful conclusion. So, I want you to know from my standpoint the team is working well, the objectives are out there, and we're going to achieve them all.

So, I will be glad to respond to questions on this, of course, later on because I know it's a matter of enormous concern in your communities. I used the figure, I think last night, mentioning some 436 units of the National Guard—over 60,000 men and women who are more than spectators. And I would just encourage all of you to give the utmost support you possibly can. I talked to some of you all last night, and I was very impressed with what you told me about this spirit of these people and even more so about the spirit in the communities.

I do think that the United States is supporting this. I can tell you that you read from time to time about lack of public support in some of the coalition countries, but

generally speaking, the support is very, very strong. And that is not just the U.S.; it's in other countries as well.

So, here at home I understand you've been talking about that. I recognize that we are facing enormously challenging problems and that some of you face exactly the same problems that the Federal Government does in terms of trying to restrict these deficits or get out of this deficit mode.

One of the subjects that I really wanted to build on as we go along here this year with the Governors is what happened at the Charlottesville education summit. I think you expressed many concerns there, those who were Governors then, and I hope we have responded. You were concerned about the readiness of the kids for school. And we have recommended and received good support for Congress on this whole concept of increased funding for Head Start. You wanted more emphasis on research and on assessment, and we saw it and got increases in those programs—not that those increases alone at the Federal level are going to get the job done. Nobody knows that better than the Governors around this table.

But you asked for a lasting commitment. And let me just say that though the Gulf war has overshadowed almost everything in terms of interests from the American people, we have not pulled back one iota in our determination to work with you. Sixteen months after that summit, the work still goes on. And I think we're going to do all right. We want to see these goals fully met, and I told you that I would convene my Cabinet to mobilize their Departments toward the achievement of the goals, and I think I can tell you that—I hope you've had a chance to glance at the report. That's working fairly well.

To those of you who weren't in office at the time of that summit—and we have many new Governors here—let me simply restate a commitment. As you work towards world-class education, the Federal Government and this President want to be with you every step of the way. And so, all of us should renew our commitment to fulfilling the goals set out in Charlottesville.

One last point is, I know how you all feel about flexibility and not mandating pro-

grams from Washington. Some people call some of our proposals warmed-over federalism. They miss the point. The point is you are on the problem-solving edge of this equation. You are better equipped to represent the diverse interests of the various States. And so we want to continue to work with you as best we can without sending a lot of mandated programs, whether it's in Medicaid or whatever else.

I understand that John Sununu came over and talked to you at length about this new proposal. Some of you mentioned it to me last night—on this block grant approach. And it is different. It's fully funded, and it is something that—I am very grateful to those who have spoken out on it already. I am not naive. We're going to have to fight together to get this through the Congress. But I think if we get this strong support continuing—it's already been manifested by the Governors—I think that will send a very strong message to the Congress. And I think we can take this step. And I hope that it will benefit each and every Governor and every State present.

So, those are the opening remarks. As I say, what I really want to do—I know you've heard from the experts—is to get your opinions on the most pressing problems. And, of course, I would be glad to try to respond to questions. I just heard a briefing that Dick Darman gave along with our Secretary of the Treasury, Nick Brady, and others on the budget. So, he's here if you want any specifics on it.

But with no further ado, and with the understanding and cooperation of the press, who are now history here—[laughter]—we thank you very much. We will go ahead and hear from you all. Thank you.

Note: President Bush spoke at 11:31 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Booth Gardner of Washington; Gov. John Ashcroft of Missouri; Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney; President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; Colin L. Powell, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; John H. Sununu, Chief of Staff to the President; Brent Scowcroft, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs; Richard G. Darman, Director of the Office of Management and Budget; and Secretary of the Treasury Nicholas F. Brady.